



# Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilot

## *Phoenix, AZ*

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

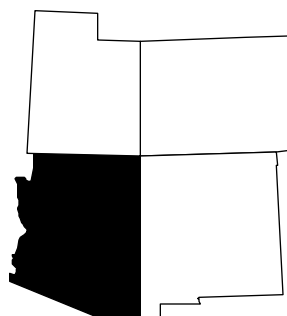
**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 120 National and Regional Brownfields Assessment Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

### BACKGROUND

EPA Region 9 has selected the City of Phoenix for a Regional Brownfields Pilot. The City's 1990 population was 983,403, twenty-eight percent of whom are minority. Although brownfields revitalization is a relatively recent issue for the City, it has already made progress. For example, the City recently completed renovation of a homeless persons shelter at a former State Superfund site. The City is also in partnership with Federal, State, and local agencies as well as community organizations and local businesses to begin urban renewal efforts related to brownfields revitalization. For instance, the City is involved in a cooperative effort with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine the feasibility of habitat restoration along part of the Salt River. Most of the original habitat along the river has been lost because of Federal water control and flood control projects, sand and gravel mining, and urban development. This project has already begun to identify candidate sites for environmental restoration and redevelopment activities.

The City has selected its Federally-designated Enterprise Community to be the focus of the Pilot. The Salt River (Rio Salado) channel bisects the targeted area. The Rio Salado community is approximately 13 square miles, encompassing several neighborhoods

### PILOT SNAPSHOT



*Phoenix, Arizona*

**Date of Award:**  
September 1997

**Amount:** \$100,000

**Site Profile:** The Pilot targets the 13-square mile Rio Salado community that the Salt River bisects, and other smaller designated redevelopment areas in central Phoenix.

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Visit the EPA Brownfields Website at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

that the City has targeted for revitalization, including Rio Vista and South Phoenix Village. A mixture of deteriorating homes, small industrial properties, abandoned structures, and large expanses of vacant land characterizes the Rio Salado area. This area has a population of almost 30,000, most of whom (88%) are Hispanic or African American. Nearly half the households exist at or below the Federal poverty level; the unemployment rate is greater than 15 percent. In addition to the Enterprise Community, the Pilot project will consider projects in several City-designated redevelopment areas.

## OBJECTIVES

The Pilot plans to establish a program to assist private property owners and developers in overcoming brownfields obstacles. The City will seek to integrate the brownfields program with other ongoing social and economic assistance programs in the project areas. One objective of the Pilot is to encourage owners and developers to request City assistance for their brownfields sites, and to select several high-priority sites that are good candidates for environmental restoration and redevelopment activities. The initial community involvement process will educate community and neighborhood groups about the brownfields program, and will collect input from those groups about potential brownfields sites, revitalization opportunities, and community issues and concerns.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Pilot will:

- Develop informational resources to assist brownfields program customers;
  - Complete community involvement activities in targeted areas to solicit community concerns about brownfields and to identify preferred end uses for those properties;
  - Initiate discussions and cooperation among stakeholders such as realtors, developers, lenders, regulatory agencies, utility companies, and community groups to promote solutions to brownfields problems; and
  - Identify and promote at least one high-profile Pilot site to highlight the existence and effectiveness of the “Phoenix Land Recycling Program.”
- Provide a single City contact to assist brownfields projects through City permitting processes and be an internal advocate for brownfields opportunities;
  - Coordinate and streamline City development reviews and economic development efforts for qualifying brownfields sites;
  - Incorporate brownfields information into City planning and economic development databases;